



**Office of the Attorney General
Paul G. Summers**

**Department of Commerce and Insurance
Commissioner Anne Pope**

NEWS RELEASE

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WALGREENS AGREES TO REDUCE TOBACCO SALES TO MINORS

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers today announced the signing of a multistate agreement with Walgreens to curb tobacco sales to young people. The Tennessee Attorney General's Office and Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs joined 40 states in the agreement to set forth retailing "best practices" and protections which are designed to reduce youth access to tobacco products.

Tennessee has long recognized that underage access to tobacco products constitutes a severe and continuing threat to public health. Studies have shown that more than 80% of adult smokers began smoking before age eighteen; that every day in the United States over 2,000 persons under age eighteen begin smoking cigarettes and one-third of those persons will one day die from a tobacco-related disease; and the illegal sale of tobacco products to underage persons by retailers is a major source of tobacco products for youth.

The agreement establishes standards for hiring, employment, and training of Walgreens' employees with regard to tobacco sales. Walgreens will continue to use cash registers in its stores which require clerks to enter information from customers' photo I.D. for the sale of tobacco products. Additionally, Walgreens will instruct clerks to check I.D. for anyone who appears to be under age 27, and will institute a secret

shopper program to monitor sales to minors. Walgreens will adopt policies prohibiting self-service displays of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products, the sale of cigarette papers or pipes to minors, and the distribution of free samples on store property. Walgreens will also restrict in-store advertising of tobacco products.

“Walgreens should be commended for its cooperation to establish important safeguards to prevent tobacco sales to minors,” Attorney General Summers said. “While many retailers express their desire to reduce underage sales, Walgreens has demonstrated its commitment.”

The agreement comes as the result of discussions between the states and Walgreens to determine how Walgreens, a leading national drug store chain and provider of health care products, can best address the problem of youth access. The Attorneys General hope this agreement will serve as a model for all drug stores and retailers who are committed to reducing the rate of sale of tobacco products to minors.